

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0163] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

Processing at 812 may also involve identifying one or more transformation functions based on the seller of the item. For example, if a bid is being translated into the currency of a buyer, the transformation may require ~~the~~ determining the functional currency of the seller in order to properly perform the conversion. Processing at 812 may involve interactions between transformations applied at 804, 808, and/or other functions applied at 812.

Please replace paragraph [0182] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

In addition, other transformation function(s) may be identified at step 1012 that are associated with neither the bid or the buyer, as described above. Furthermore, other transformations may be identified at ~~step~~ step 1012 that define transformations on transformation functions, as described above. In some embodiments, processing at 1012 may also include the application of transformation functions used to preserve the integrity of the auction. For example, a transformation function intended to ensure that bidding always increases in a forward English auction may be applied at 1012.

Please replace paragraph [0085] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

Referring now to FIG. 2, a bid and status process 50 pursuant to embodiments of the present invention is shown. Process 50 will be described to illustrate certain features of embodiments of the present invention. Further details of embodiments of the present invention will be provided below. Process 50 involves interaction between a number of different participants in an auction, referred to here as Participant A, Participant B, and Participant C. In the depicted process, Participant A is participating as a buyer in an auction 30 and submits a bid (in this example, the bid is an offer to purchase) on an item. This bid may be, for example, submitted to an auction administrator (not shown) running the auction 30. The bid is transformed by a transformation function 20a. In one embodiment, transformation function 20a is applied by software residing at the participant device 12a operated by Participant A. In another embodiment, it may be applied by software residing at auction administrator device 16. In another embodiment, transformation function 20a may be applied by software residing at an auction service provider device (e.g., item 24 of FIG. 1). In yet other embodiments, the function may be applied by software residing at an seller device (e.g., item 12n-z of FIG. 1). Other techniques for enforcing and applying transformation functions may also be used.

Please replace paragraph [0101] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

The tables shown in FIG. 4 and FIG. 23 defines a number of fields 202-208 for each of the entries. In the embodiment depicted, the fields specify: a participant identifier 202, a name 204, contact information 206, and ~~transformation~~-rule(s) 208. In some embodiments, rule 208 may be a configuration rule or a transformation rule. Other fields and combinations of fields may also be used to provide and access information about different participants in an auction and their associated transformation functions.

Please replace paragraph [0126] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

Referring now to FIG. 7, a table is shown which represents a bid database 500 that may be stored at, or accessible by, auction administrator device 100 according to an embodiment of the present invention. The table includes a number of entries identifying bids that have been received in auctions administered by an auction administrator operating auction administrator device 100. For clarity of exposition, only a few exemplary bids are illustrated in the table shown in FIG. 7. As described in the definitions set forth above, “bids” as used herein may refer to either offers to purchase or offers to sell (depending on the type of auction operated), therefore, bid database 500 may record information about offers to sell (e.g., in the case of a buy-side auction), offers to purchase (e.g., in the case of a sell-side auction), or both offers to purchase and offers to sell (e.g., in the case of a two-sided auction). Database 520 of FIG. 26 is another embodiment of Database 500 of FIG. 7.

Please replace paragraph [0164] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

In some embodiments, processing at 812 may also include the application 814 of transformation functions used to preserve the integrity of the auction. For example, a transformation function intended to ensure that bidding always monotonically increases in a forward English auction may be applied at 814. Transformation functions identified at 812 may also be identified based on information from the auction service provider (e.g., where the service provider is acting as a logistics provider, settlement entity, or otherwise providing services to enhance the value of the item, or to facilitate transactions for the item).

Please replace paragraph [0285] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

In embodiments allowing bidding between disparate entities, participant database ~~200~~ 220 described above may further include data specifying geographical and industry information about participants. For example, a further participant database ~~200~~ 220 is shown at FIG. 18. Geographical information 214 may be, for example, information identifying particular geographical information 214 about the participant identified by participant identifier 202 which may be used in embodiments of the present invention to generate, identify, or otherwise apply transformation functions 212 to bids and/or status inquiries submitted by or on behalf of the participant. Geographical information 214 may be information provided by or on behalf of the participant indicating the country, region or area where the entity is located (which may be, for example, the entity's legal place of business) or the location where the item should be shipped, or the like.

Please replace paragraph [0286] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

Industry information 210 may be, for example, information identifying an industry or industry segment in which the participant identified by participant identifier 202 functions. Industry information may include, for example, standardized industry codes (SIC) or other data used to specify a particular industry. In some embodiments, auction administrator 16 or other entities (alone or in combination) associated with system 10 (FIG. 17) may establish customized industry information for one or more auctions conducted using system 10. For example, an auction administrator 16 which conducts auctions of computer equipment which are frequented by participants having specialized industry requirements may establish customized industry information for each of the different industries. For simplicity and clarity of exposition, simple identifiers of industry segments are described as provided in participant database 200. Those skilled in the art will recognize that other types and sources of industry information may be used. Other fields and combinations of fields may also be used to provide and access information about different participants in an auction. For example, in some embodiments, a field indicating membership in a particular group or organization may also be provided in participant database 200.

Please replace paragraph [0331] with the following amended paragraph marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

As an example of a status request processed using process 2200, referring to participant database 200 and transformation function database 400, if participant P1001 is the participant requesting status at 2210, processing at 2212 may involve a search of participant database 200 which will identify that participant P1001 is located in Karachi, Pakistan and is in SIC industry 5734. In some embodiments, a status request may be received at 2214. If the participant is seeking status in an auction involving certain export-controlled computers (such as auction A1003), processing at 2216 will determine that transformation function F1002 should be applied. Other transformation functions may also be identified (e.g., a currency conversion function such as F1004 or F1005 may also be identified), based on the participant's geographical characteristics, industry characteristics, group characteristics, or originating auction or marketplace. If a determination is made that transformation(s) of the status are not required, then at 2222 the status is presented.